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Country note****Jordan***Summary*

The Executive Director presents the country note for Jordan for a programme of cooperation for the period 2003 to 2007.

The situation of children and women

1. Jordan, with a per capita gross national product of \$1,500, has a population of 5,182,000 which is 80 per cent urban; it is also youthful, with 51 per cent less than 19 years old and 33 per cent between 10-24 years old. The country's progress in basic health and other social indicators is impressive. Infant and under-five mortality rates (1999) are 29 and 35 per 1,000 live births respectively, with no gender disparities. However, both are higher in rural areas and in the southern part of the country. The maternal mortality ratio stands at 41 per 100,000 live births (1996); 95 per cent of mothers receive antenatal care, and trained medical professionals attend 97 per cent of deliveries. Immunization coverage is over 90 per cent for all antigens, and the country has been polio free since 1995. Hepatitis B, measles/mumps/rubella and *haemophilus influenzae* (Hib) vaccines are included in the national immunization programme. Micronutrient deficiencies remain a concern, especially goitre, which affects 33 per cent of children, and anaemia, which affects 28.6 per cent of women. The Government is giving priority to strengthening the

* E/ICEF/2002/2.

** An addendum to the present report containing the final country programme recommendation will be submitted to the Executive Board for approval at its second regular session of 2002.



child caring skills of parents and other caregivers. Less than 30 per cent of children between 3-5 years old are enrolled in pre-schools. The net enrolment rate in primary schools (grades 1-10) is 95 per cent, with no gender or geographical disparities; and the net enrolment rate for secondary education is 60 per cent.

2. There is a shortage of accurate data on children with special needs. According to government records, 70 per cent of reported cases of sexual violence are against children, but there is limited social research on the magnitude and the roots of the problem. The Ministry of Social Development provides institutional care for about 200 girls and 130 boys who are in need of special protection, excluding the disabled; non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provide similar care to around 950 children. Child labour is also believed to be underreported, especially for girls. Therefore, the Ministry of Labour is establishing a national database on related issues and developing a national strategy for the elimination of child labour.

3. Of the estimated total number of disabled children, who constitute the largest visible group of children in special need, about 3 per cent, or some 7,000 children, benefit from special services through 105 centres. With UNICEF support, the Ministry of Health has established a system to screen children for disabilities. Several successful community-based rehabilitation programmes are supported by UNICEF and NGOs.

4. The participation of adolescents in public life is limited, and adolescent programmes do not target the needs of specific subgroups. UNICEF is supporting a national survey on the participation of adolescents in public life and on their aspirations and attitudes. Healthy lifestyles of this age group are becoming a concern. The 1999 Global Youth Tobacco Survey showed that in the 13- to 15-year-old age group, 14.5 per cent of girls and 25 per cent of boys smoke. With the support of the United Nations Foundation, UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have started addressing the specific needs of adolescents jointly.

5. The Royal Family leads in keeping children high on the national agenda. In the context of the Global Movement for Children, a wide variety of traditional and new partners, including national opinion leaders and those from the private sector, have been mobilized to advocate for children. Jordan has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, although with reservations, and it has yet to publish them in the official gazette. The Two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on child soldiers and the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children have also been ratified. Progress was made in developing the Jordanian Childhood Act, which will ensure the harmonization of national legislation with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Lessons learned from past cooperation

6. Experience showed that while the overall mix of strategies was appropriate, the future programme should move from a vertical to an integrated life cycle approach; ensure better convergence of programme activities in selected geographic areas; strengthen monitoring and evaluation components; develop a more integrated communication strategy; and respond to emerging priorities in early child development (ECD), adolescents and protection issues. Experience also showed that

there is great potential for partnerships with the private sector in programming for children and women.

7. The existence of government and NGO structures did not always translate into real impact on the situation of children and women. The future programme should emphasize building institutional capacities for programme implementation; making essential planning tools available, such as disaggregated data for targeting the underserved; and drawing on the strength of partners to take the lead and support quality and comprehensive care services for children and women.

8. The community empowerment model developed by UNICEF proved successful in building the capacity of targeted communities in self-organization and self-help. However, national-level coordination of interventions by different partners needs to be strengthened in order to arrive at a comprehensive approach to community-led planning and management of social development programmes.

Proposed country programme strategy

9. The proposed programme of cooperation, developed with the participation of some 100 government, NGO, United Nations and youth partners, will adopt a life cycle, rights and gender-based approach. This approach has also been adopted for the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes. In addition, an emergency preparedness plan has been developed and is being updated regularly.

10. The overall goal of the proposed programme of cooperation, which comprises five interdependent programmes, is to promote the rights of children and women and contribute to their protection. The first two programmes relate to the global organizational priorities, while the third addresses a regional priority. To achieve its cross-cutting objectives, the country programme will capitalize on achievements gained, promote participation at all levels, and foster alliances with and for children. At the national level, the programme will strengthen the knowledge base, support rights monitoring and advocacy, and mobilize partnerships for policy dialogue and legislative change. At governorate and community levels, the programme will support the development of community self-help structures to reduce disparities in 5 of the 12 governorates.

11. The **integrated early child care and development (ECCD)** programme will support the translation of the national ECD strategy into legislative and administrative action, as well as into integrated programmes. It will ensure that in the five target governorates, the necessary knowledge and skills exist for providing integrated ECCD services and for applying the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness approach. Interventions for micronutrient deficiencies will be part of this community-oriented and family-focused programme. Parental education in integrated ECCD, including for fathers and communities, will encompass care, psychosocial stimulation and early learning as integral components. In addition to the Government and national NGOs, UNICEF will develop its partnership with the National Council for Family Affairs, and continue to work with the World Health Organization (WHO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the private sector.

12. The **protection** programme will support action-oriented research and advocacy to raise public awareness on child protection issues; harmonize national legislation with both Conventions; and develop policies and support implementation of initiatives for the protection of children and women. The programme will build national capacities to address the needs of children deprived of parental care, of children and women victims of violence and abuse, as well as community-based rehabilitation of disabled children. UNICEF will continue its partnerships with the Government, national NGOs, the British Council and the International Labour Organization; and develop its partnership with the National Council for Family Affairs.

13. The **adolescent participation and empowerment** programme will support operational research, public awareness-raising and the development and implementation of a national youth strategy; and build the capacities of adolescents, especially girls, in leadership, life skills and healthy lifestyles. It will also provide forums for self-expression and organization. The programme will train service providers in participatory planning and in the implementation of programmes for adolescents. It will support the Government to create better environments in primary and secondary schools, and in youth centres. UNICEF will collaborate in this programme with UNFPA, WHO and Save the Children Alliance, in addition to government and national NGO partners.

14. The **community empowerment** programme will promote a national approach to community-led social development. The programme will work with NGOs and community leaders to mobilize local resources; establish community development structures; and strengthen their self-organization, participatory assessment and programme management skills. Through the convergence of all other programme interventions, this programme will empower families of under-privileged communities with skills and knowledge to effect positive behaviour change for the benefit of children and women. In addition to government and NGO partners, UNICEF will work with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNFPA, WHO, the World Food Programme and USAID.

15. The **national movement for children and monitoring of rights** programme will create awareness among policy and decision makers, media and prominent opinion leaders of key priority issues for children; and improve the skills of media persons in gender-sensitive reporting. It will also strengthen national capacities to effectively monitor the situation of children and women, identify disparities, and report on the implementation of the two Conventions and future plans for children. The programme will further ensure integrated monitoring and evaluation of all programme components as well as the development of programme communication plans in support of the other four programmes. In addition to the Government and national NGOs, UNICEF will work with UNDP, USAID and the private sector; and develop its partnership with the National Council for Family Affairs.

16. **Cross-sectoral costs** will be used to cover overall coordination in addition to financial and programme monitoring and evaluation.

Estimated programme budget

Estimated programme cooperation, 2003-2007^a

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	<i>Regular resources</i>	<i>Other resources</i>	<i>Total</i>
Integrated early child care and development	490	1 000	1 490
Protection	460	1 500	1 960
Adolescent participation and empowerment	380	1 500	1 880
Community empowerment	510	1 000	1 510
National movement for children and monitoring of rights	550	500	1 050
Cross-sectoral costs	950	—	950
Total	3 340	5 500	8 840

^a These are indicative figures only which are subject to change once aggregate financial data are finalized.

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Procedures for consideration and approval of proposals for country programmes of cooperation*Summary*

The present document contains proposals for the modification of current procedures, for the consideration and approval of country programmes of cooperation, which were adopted by the Executive Board in 1995 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, decision 1995/8). The proposed changes aim to streamline and simplify existing procedures, thereby reducing duplication and workload, while maintaining a sound, country-based, results-oriented programming process under the leadership of national authorities. The changes will enable the preparation of UNICEF programmes of cooperation to be situated within the country goals and strategies of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and to continue to reflect national priorities for children.

The changes detailed in this document will ensure the harmonization of UNICEF programme preparation and approval procedures with those of other members of the United Nations Development Group in the context of United Nations reform. They will also continue to provide the Executive Board with a mechanism to provide comments and advice on draft programme proposals, which will be taken into account by programme countries and UNICEF in the finalization of country programmes of cooperation.

* E/ICEF/2002/2.



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I. Background

1. At its first regular session of 1995, the Executive Board adopted a two-phase procedure for considering and approving proposals for country programmes of cooperation (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, decision 1995/8). This involved the submission of a brief country note on programme strategies and priorities at the first regular session for the comments of the Board. This was followed by a final country programme document (the country programme recommendation) for approval on a no objection basis at the second regular session.
2. The ongoing implementation of that decision was reviewed by the Executive Board at its second regular session of 1998 (E/ICEF/1998/P/L.22 and E/ICEF/1998/6/Rev.1, decision 1998/16). The Board noted that, in future, changes to the approval process might result from: the overall implementation of United Nations reform; the introduction of new programming instruments, specifically the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF); and efforts to further economize and streamline UNICEF programming procedures and instruments.
3. Experience since 1998 in the harmonization of the programme cycles of agencies in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), and in the formulation of CCAs and UNDAFs, has indicated the need for modification of the procedures for considering proposals for country programmes of cooperation which were adopted by the Executive Board in 1995. This need is reinforced by the calls for simplification and harmonization of United Nations rules and procedures by the United Nations General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, including with reference to programming processes.¹ These calls have been reiterated by the General Assembly at recent triennial comprehensive policy reviews.²

II. Modification of the country programme consideration and approval process by the Executive Board

A. Introduction

4. An internal review by the UNICEF secretariat of recent experience and ongoing consultations with partner agencies in UNDG has resulted in the proposals in the present document for modification of the programme consideration and approval process by the Executive Board. These proposals take into account the timing of the CCA and UNDAF, and reflect the need for these country-specific analytical and strategic framework documents to be in place prior to the detailed design of individual agency programmes of cooperation, as a basis for programme development.
5. The modifications proposed in this document are also designed to reduce the length of time and the workload for national authorities and UNICEF associated with the design of new programmes of cooperation, while at the same time

¹ See, inter alia, General Assembly resolutions 42/196, 44/211, 47/199, 50/120, 53/192 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/6, para. 12.

² The most recent General Assembly resolutions from these reviews are 53/192 and 56/201, from 1998 and 2001, respectively.

preserving and promoting a soundly based programming process. They will eliminate overlaps in phasing and reduce duplication among documents, which make the current process unnecessarily cumbersome. At the same time, they respond directly to the calls for harmonization and streamlining of programme preparation procedures among the UNDG agencies, and to the concerns of the new UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for the period 2002-2005 (E/ICEF/2001/13) for a greater strategic focus and results orientation of UNICEF cooperation.

B. Modified procedures for Executive Board consideration and approval of new country programmes

6. CCA and UNDAF provide the starting points and are integral steps in the development of proposals for UNICEF country programmes of cooperation. This is now reflected by the UNICEF secretariat in internal guidelines for field offices, including the core "Programme Policy and Procedure Manual: Programme Operations". Together with the UNICEF MTSP and national policies and priorities, particularly as they relate to the fulfilment of the rights of children and women, CCA and UNDAF provide the country-specific framework for the development, under the leadership of the Government, of proposals for new UNICEF programmes of cooperation.

7. As part of its ongoing contributions to national monitoring of children, UNICEF will continue to collaborate with and support national partners in undertaking detailed assessments and analyses of issues affecting children's and women's rights. The phasing and design of these situation analyses will be determined in each country on a flexible basis, and will be planned as a regular part of the country programme of cooperation. They will no longer comprise a formal step in the preparation of a new country programme. The results of these in-depth analyses of children and women will contribute to the wider country analyses undertaken for the CCA, which will form the first step in programme preparation. This will help to ensure the consideration of priority national issues for children in the CCA and subsequently in the UNDAF. Thus, UNDAF provides the broader country framework for the development of the UNICEF programme of cooperation, as well as for those of other United Nations agencies.

8. CCA and UNDAF are expected to be finalized in the penultimate year of the harmonized programme cycle. The development of the UNICEF country programme of cooperation will normally commence subsequent to the development of the UNDAF, which identifies the strategic goals and priorities for the work of the United Nations system in the country. Continuing current practice, the Government and UNICEF will hold a programme strategy meeting, involving other partners as appropriate, in order to define the more specific priorities, strategies and key areas of intervention for the UNICEF programme of cooperation.

9. The programme strategy meeting will be held early in the year preceding the start of a new programme cooperation cycle. It will provide the basis for determining the specific contributions of UNICEF to national efforts for fulfilling children's rights and the Millennium Development Goals within a series of collaborative relationships with national, United Nations and other development partners. It will take into account the goals of UNDAF itself, as well as national plans and priorities relating to children and women, including those reflected in

instruments such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and sector-wide approaches (SWAPs); the priorities of the MTSP as approved by the Executive Board; lessons learned from previous programmes of cooperation; the expected contributions by other cooperating partners to national efforts for children's and women's rights; and, where relevant, observations or recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child relating to national reports on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

10. Subsequent to the programme strategy meeting, a draft country note, including proposed funding allocations, will be prepared for consideration of the Executive Board at its annual session in the year prior to the commencement of the new country programme cycle. During the same period, the associated integrated budget and country programme management plan will also be prepared.

11. The format of the current country note will be modified and lengthened, to a range of 6-10 pages, of text, depending on the size and other characteristics of the proposed programme of cooperation. Compared to the current country note format, the new country note will provide the Executive Board with more details of the proposed strategies for cooperation and programme components. The country note will contain the following main elements:

(a) A summary of the situation of children and women, drawn from the in-depth UNICEF-supported analysis of children and women, and the wider CCA;

(b) A summary of key results and lessons learned from the current programme of cooperation;

(c) The aggregate programme budget for the forthcoming cooperation period, with an indicative breakdown by main programme components;

(d) The country programme goals and strategies, detailing the relationship with the UNDAF goals; national plans and priorities, including PRSPs and SWAPs where they exist; and the priorities and strategies of the UNICEF MTSP;

(e) An analysis of programme partnerships and the international cooperation context;

(f) An outline of each main programme component, including objectives and main areas of intervention to be supported;

(g) Programme management, monitoring and evaluation;

(h) A basic data table.

12. The Executive Board, which will provide comments to the secretariat on the draft country note at the annual session, will also be requested at this session to approve the proposed aggregate budget totals for regular resources and other resources.

13. Following discussion of the draft country notes at the annual session, the comments of the Executive Board will be conveyed to the respective Governments and UNICEF country representatives by the UNICEF regional directors. The country note and associated master plan of operations (MPO) for the forthcoming programme of cooperation will then be finalized by the respective Government and UNICEF, taking into account the comments provided by the Board. The revised country note will provide the basis for the text of the MPO. A country programme

results matrix will also be developed subsequent to the annual session as an annex to the revised country note and as part of the MPO. This will be used as an instrument for results-oriented management, monitoring and future adjustments, including at the mid-term review (MTR) of the programme of cooperation.

14. The revised country note, incorporating the results matrix, as well as any modifications to the text and any reallocations among the programme components within the approved aggregate programme budget, will be posted on the UNICEF Extranet in October.

15. The revised country notes will be approved on a no objection basis at the first regular session of the Executive Board in January of the first year of the new country programme, unless at least five Board members have informed the secretariat in writing within six weeks following the posting of a country note on the Extranet of their wish to further discuss the note for a particular country.

16. The modified procedure described above will be introduced for proposals for country programmes of cooperation being presented to the Executive Board in 2003.

III. Other considerations

17. In countries where no UNDAF is being undertaken, the CCA and/or the most recent situation analysis of children and women, together with the various policy and planning instruments indicated in paragraph 9 above, will provide the basis for the development of the country note for UNICEF cooperation.

18. Short-duration country programme cycles will continue to be avoided as much as possible, except where necessary to achieve or maintain harmonization of cycles among the United Nations agencies. Even in countries experiencing emergency situations, a medium-duration cycle will be adopted, wherever feasible, and programme partners will use the existing annual and mid-term reviews to make necessary adjustments to the programme focus. Significant changes in programme focus and expected key results as a consequence of these reviews will be reported to the Executive Board by the regional directors.

19. Programme proposals for countries that are expected to make a transition in status may, in some cases, be of short duration. They will be handled in the same way as regular country programme proposals, existing Executive Board procedures for the consideration and approval of other forms of programme recommendations — including “stand-alone” proposals for programmes to be funded by other resources only, proposals for intercountry and interregional programmes, and proposals for additional regular resources for already-approved programmes — will remain in effect.

20. The procedures introduced in Executive Board decision 1995/8 for summary reports on the outcomes of MTRs and major evaluations of country programmes, including on the need for any adjustments in the originally approved programme of cooperation, will also continue on the basis of the arrangements currently in effect. To even the flow of documentation and associated work requirements, these reports will, from 2003, be presented to the Board at its second regular session.

IV. Harmonization of country programme preparation procedures among United Nations Development Group agencies

21. At its 2001 annual session, the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) adopted a decision on the UNDP/UNFPA programming process (2001/11). This, *inter alia*, determined that the draft country outlines would be reviewed by the Executive Board for discussion at their annual sessions and, where applicable, CCA and UNDAF would be made available for information. Following this, the agencies would assist Governments in finalizing the country programmes, taking into account comments made by the Board. These programmes would then be posted on the web sites of the respective agencies and approved on a no objection basis in January of the first year of the new country programme.

22. The proposals in this document for modification of the country programme consideration and approval procedures of the Executive Board are highly consistent with the above decision of the UNDP/UNFPA Board, and will bring about effective harmonization of the preparation and approval procedures of the respective agencies within the context of United Nations reform and, specifically, of CCA and UNDAF.

V. Draft decision

23. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board,

Having reviewed the report on "Procedures for consideration and approval of proposals for country programmes of cooperation" (E/ICEF/2002/P/L.16),

Welcoming the continued efforts made by the United Nations Development Group towards further harmonization and streamlining of the cycles and preparation procedures for country programmes of cooperation,

Emphasizing that the programming process for UNICEF cooperation should continue to reflect national priorities and needs, under the primary responsibility of the national Government, and within the framework of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan for the period 2002-2005 (E/ICEF/2001/13) and in consultation with other relevant agencies and partners, as appropriate;

1. *Decides* that:

(a) The draft country notes for UNICEF programmes of cooperation will be developed on the basis of national plans and priorities, and within the framework of the Common Country Assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

(b) The draft country notes will be 6-10 pages in length, depending on the size and other characteristics of the programme of cooperation, and will summarize the situation of children and women, the key results achieved and lessons learned from prior cooperation, while highlighting the main components of the proposed country programme, including objectives, strategies, main areas of assistance,

expected results, major partnerships, management and monitoring arrangements, and proposed budget;

(c) The draft country notes will be presented to the Executive Board for discussion and comment at the annual session prior to the commencement of the programme cycle, and for approval of the aggregate totals of estimated regular and other resources in the programme budget;

(d) The country notes will be revised by the respective Government and UNICEF following presentation to the Executive Board, taking into account comments made by the Board;

(e) The revised country notes, including a results matrix, will be posted by October of the last year of the country programme on the UNICEF Extranet and will be approved at the first regular Board session in January on a no objection basis, unless at least five members have informed the secretariat in writing, within six weeks of the posting of a country note, of their wish to bring the particular country programme before the Executive Board;

(f) The above modifications will take effect in 2003;

(g) From 2003, the outcomes of mid-term reviews and major evaluations of country programmes will be considered at the second regular session of the Executive Board;

(h) The current arrangements for the consideration of other forms of programme recommendations — including "stand-alone" proposals for programmes to be funded by other resources only, proposals for intercountry and interregional programmes, and proposals for additional regular resources for already-approved programmes — will remain in effect;

2. *Requests* the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board at its annual session in 2005 on progress and any issues arising from implementation of the present decision.